

CLAIM AMENDMENTS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) Method for creating and managing multilateral contractual relationships among contracting parties under a privacy standard, said contracting parties comprising (1) “covered entities” receiving data of customers and creating, recording, using, and disclosing private data of such customers in the ordinary course of business, and (2) “business associates” requiring the use of said private data, said method comprising the steps of:

[[a]] assigning digital identities to the contracting parties;
certifying each of said contracting parties is certified in compliance with
privacy standards;

generating a database of digital identities corresponding to self-certified
contracting parties;

[[b]] providing a multilateral Master Business Associate Contract (MBAC) template having non-negotiable terms requiring observation of said privacy standard with respect to said private data of a customer;

[[c]] providing an electronic interface accessible to said digital identities to facilitate negotiating and entering binding multilateral contractual agreements among at least one of said covered entities and a plurality of said business associates pursuant to the terms of said MBAC template; [[and]]

determining if disclosing of the private data of customers is required;
determining whether a contracting party is found in said self-certified
database;

allowing access to said MBAC database by said contracting parties;
creating a multilateral contractual agreement from said MBAC template
terms; and

[[d]] storing said multilateral contractual agreements in an MBAC database.

2. (Canceled)
3. (Original) The method according to Claim 1, wherein said electronic interface includes interactive means for negotiating additional terms with respect to use or disclosure of said private data.
4. (Original) Method for creating and managing multilateral contractual relationships among contracting parties under a privacy standard, said contracting parties comprising (1) “covered entities” receiving data of customers and creating, recording, using, and disclosing private data of such customers in the ordinary course of business, and (2) “business associates” requiring the use of said private data, said method comprising the steps of:
 - (a) assigning digital identities to the contracting parties;
 - (b) providing a multilateral Master Business Associate Contract (MBAC) template having non-negotiable terms requiring observation of said privacy standard with respect to said private data of a customer;
 - (c) providing self-certification procedures for contracting parties to certify adherence to said privacy standard as self-certified covered entities or as self-certified business associates;
 - (d) providing an electronic interface accessible to said digital identities to facilitate negotiating and entering binding multilateral contractual agreements among at least one of said self-certified covered entities and a plurality of said self-certified business associates pursuant to the terms of said MBAC template;
allowing access to said MBAC database by said contracting parties;
creating a multilateral contractual agreement from said MBAC template terms; and
 - (e) storing said multilateral contractual agreements in an MBAC database.
5. (Original) The method according to Claim 4, wherein said self-certification procedures comprise the additional steps of:
 - providing a self-certification standard affidavit template for self-certification by electronic signature; and
 - storing affidavits corresponding to said template in a separate self-certification database.

6. (Original) The method according to Claim 4, wherein said self-certification procedures comprise warranty clauses in said MBAC.
7. (Original) The method according to Claim 4, wherein said electronic interface includes interactive means for negotiating said additional terms with respect to use or disclosure of said private data.
8. (Original) The method according to Claim 4, wherein said interactive means includes means for a covered entity to offer and for a business associate to accept said non-negotiable terms in the MBAC.
9. (Original) The method according to Claim 4 including the additional step of:
accessing a selected multilateral contractual agreement in said MBAC
database for permission to disclose selected private data to a selected self-
certified business associate.
10. (Original) The method according to Claim 4, wherein said electronic interface comprises the internet.

11. (Original) Method for creating and managing multilateral contractual relationships among contracting parties under a privacy standard applicable to protected health information (PHI), said contracting parties comprising (1) “covered entities” receiving data of customers and creating, recording, using, and disclosing PHI data of such customers in the ordinary course of business, and (2) “business associates” requiring the use of said PHI data, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) assigning digital identities to the contracting parties;

certifying each of said contracting parties is certified in compliance with privacy standards;

generating a database of digital identities corresponding to self-certified contracting parties;

(b) providing a multilateral Master Business Associate Contract (MBAC) template having non-negotiable terms requiring observation of said privacy standard with respect to said PHI data of a customer;

(c) providing a self-certification standard affidavit template for contracting parties to certify adherence to said privacy standard as self-certified covered entities or as self-certified business associates by electronic signature so as to achieve self-certification;

allowing access to said self-certification standard affidavit template;

(d) storing completed affidavits corresponding to said template in a separate self-certification database;

(e) providing an electronic interface accessible to said digital identities, said electronic interface being selectively connectable to the self-certification database to facilitate negotiating and entering binding multilateral contractual agreements among at least one of said self-certified covered entities and a plurality of said self-certified business associates pursuant to the terms of said affidavits and said MBAC template; and

(f) storing said multilateral contractual agreements in an MBAC database.

12. (Original) The method according to Claim 11, wherein said electronic interface includes interactive means for negotiating said additional terms with respect to use or disclosure of said PHI data.

13. (Original) The method according to Claim 11, wherein said interactive means includes means for a covered entity to offer and for a business associate to accept said non-negotiable terms in the MBAC.
14. (Original) The method according to Claim 11 including the additional step of:
accessing a selected multilateral contractual agreement in said MBAC
database for permission to disclose selected PHI data to a selected self-certified
business associate.
15. (Original) The method according to Claim 11, wherein said electronic
interface comprises the internet.